

SINGLETERY LAKE STATE PARK

PARK PROFILE

PARK PURPOSE STATEMENT

Singletary Lake has a long history of public ownership. In 1827, legislation passed expressly forbidding lands covered by the waters of any lake within North Carolina from being recorded for private ownership. In 1911, the General Assembly passed legislation declaring that certain lakes containing 500 acres or more, including 572-acre Singletary Lake, were not to be sold but should "...always be and remain the property of the State of North Carolina for the use and benefit of all the people of the state." The legislation thus clearly indicated the public trust nature of Singletary Lake.

In order to create jobs during the 1930s, the federal government undertook conservation programs. Submarginal farm lands in the Bladen County area, including those around Singletary Lake, were purchased. Under management of the Resettlement Administration from 1936–1939, recreation facilities were constructed at Singletary Lake. The area was leased to the state in July 1939, and in October 1954 the land surrounding Singletary Lake was given to the state by the federal government. The deed requires that the land be used for public purposes. Additional recreation facilities constructed with Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund assistance requires that the park be maintained and used only for public outdoor recreation purposes.

Singletary Lake State Park contains three high quality natural community types: Coastal Plain Small Stream Swamp (Blackwater Subtype), Pond Pine Woodland and Xeric Sandhill Scrub. The Turkey Oak Registered Natural Heritage Area encompasses 155 acres along the lake's northeast shore. It includes a portion of the sand rim surrounding the large Carolina bay. Species of special interest in or near the registered area include the white wicky (*Kalmia cuneata*), the Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*), yellow pitcher plants and the red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*). Turkey oak and longleaf pine dominate the sand rim, while pocosin vegetation, including Atlantic white cedar, dominates the shoreline.

Carolina bays are found only in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The bays are found in the loose, unconsolidated sands that form a cover within the Atlantic Coastal Plain, with the greatest concentration of bays in Bladen County. Their origin has long been a matter of speculation and debate. Carolina bays are shallow, oval depressions oriented in a southeast-northwest direction. Singletary Lake is a classic example of a water-filled Carolina bay. It has a shallow bottom with the deepest point southeast of the bay's center, and a raised sand rim best developed at the southeast end. The shorelines vary from sand to peat. Peat deposits also surround the lakes and fill the non-lake remainder of the bays. The term "bay," in this case, refers to the distinctive vegetation—such as loblolly bay—that slowly fills these depressions. Only a few bays still contain water. Most have filled naturally with sediment and vegetation.

Singletary Lake State Park's small land base prohibits offering a diversity of recreational activities. The park serves to complement day recreational use at other nearby state lakes by offering organized group overnight interpretation and education and extended stay recreation in a peaceful, natural setting. It provides two group camps that offer opportunities for unique camping experiences and fellowship. Uses of the park include swimming, boating, hiking, sunning, fishing and nature study. The primary interpretive theme focuses on the Carolina bay. Recreational activities are appropriately limited to preserve the quality of the recreational experience and to protect the park's outstanding natural resources.

Singletary Lake State Park offers outstanding scenic vistas of its lake and undeveloped shoreline. The broad expanses of tea-colored water, the barren sand lake rims and the dense, vegetative-filled bay forest are in stark contrast to one another. In places, beautiful, large, baldcypress trees hung with Spanish moss line the shore or grow in the shallow water. The trail offers a unique opportunity to walk through and view densely vegetated bog areas of a Carolina bay, the desert-like appearance of the sand rim and lovely lakeside flora.

Singletary Lake State Park contains a significant example of depression-era public works architecture. Camp Ipecac, built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, is an unusually intact and complete grouping of CCC buildings.

Singletary Lake State Park exists so that its valuable biological, geological, recreational, scenic and cultural values can be protected and because of the value of Singletary Lake as a public trust resource. The Division of Parks and Recreation is charged with preserving these values and providing park experiences that promote pride in and understanding of North Carolina's natural heritage.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Carolina Bay Ecology: This interpretive theme focuses on the plant communities associated with the aquatic environment and the peatsoils within the sand rim, and also on the plant communities associated with the mineral soils of the sand rim adjacent to the Carolina bay. Key animal species, such as the red-cockaded woodpecker and the fox squirrel, are included. The role of fire in creating and maintaining habitat for the plants and animals of peat soil, mineral soil and the ecotone or transition zone is also a part of the Carolina bay ecology.

Origin of Carolina Bay: This interpretive theme uses photographs, models, games and investigations to test some of the 29 theories explaining the formation of Carolina bays. Emphasis is placed on the physical characteristics of Carolina bays, particularly their geomorphology (shape, orientation, depth, etc.) and their water quality (pH, clarity and temperature).

STATISTICS

Visitation (1999)	16885
Operating Budget (FY 98-99)	\$ 242,623.89
Revenue (FY 98-99)	\$ 41,430

VISITOR FACILITIES

Improved group camping (2 sites, including showers, cabins and messhall/kitchen facilities)	Drinking water
Hiking trail (1.0 mile total)	Lake swimming (campers only)

CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION NEEDS

- 1 The **park office** project will construct a 20 car parking area for visitors and staff, handicap access to the lake, water and electric service extension, gazebo at the lake, main gate and sign, office/visitor center (3500 sq.ft.), and exhibits. \$ 1,082,207

TOTAL: \$ 1,082,207

REGISTERED NATURAL HERITAGE AREA

Turkey Oak Registered Natural Heritage Area: This area covers 155 acres along Singletary Lake's northeast shore. It includes a Pond Pine Woodland community as well as a Xeric Sandhill Scrub community. Rare plant and animal species in or near the registered area include the Venus Flytrap, white wicky and the Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Turkey oak and longleaf pine dominate the sand rim; pocosin vegetation, including Atlantic White Cedar, dominates the shoreline. The Natural Heritage Program has identified three natural community types in this area: Coastal Plain Small Stream Swamp (Blackwater Subtype); Pond Pine Woodland; and Xeric Sandhill Scrub.

FUTURE LAND ACQUISITION NEEDS

At 1,221 acres, land acquisition is complete at Singletary Lake.

1999 STAFF POSITIONS

Permanent		Seasonal		Peak Load	
Park Superintendent II	1	General Utility Worker	1	Park Attendant	1
Park Ranger II	1				
Maintenance Mechanic III	1				
General Utility Worker	1				
Office Assistant III	1				

PROPOSED STAFF ADDITIONS

Permanent		Seasonal		Peak Load	
Park Ranger I	1				